



# Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

**C**hlamydia *trachomatis*, a sexually transmitted infection is the most commonly reported communicable disease in California. Untreated infections in women are associated with an increased risk of adverse reproductive health outcomes such as pelvic inflammatory disease and infertility. Risk factors for chlamydia infection include: age less than 25 years, more than one sexual partner, and a new sexual partner. In 1998, the Centers for Disease Control Sexually Transmitted Disease Treatment Guidelines recommended that all sexually active adolescent girls should be tested for chlamydia annually. In addition, it was recommended that women aged 20-24 years old with multiple partners or new partners be tested. Because most women with chlamydia have no symptoms or noticeable signs of infection, testing is necessary to identify these infections for timely treatment. There is also a need to increase the number of women who are aware of the need for chlamydia testing.

To address this problem, the California Department of Health Services initiated the Chlamydia Awareness and Prevention Program to enhance local capacity for awareness of chlamydia. This program is designed to prevent individuals from ever becoming infected with chlamydia and to increase testing among those who may have been exposed.

To obtain baseline data to inform these programs, in 1998 the California Women's Health Survey asked women aged 18-24 years old: **During the next year, how likely is it that you will ask your doctor to test you for chlamydia?** Women were also asked about insurance status, use of medical services, and sexual behavior.

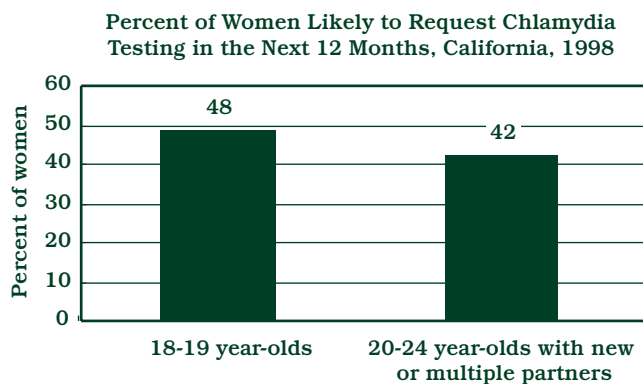
- Approximately half (48%) of adolescent girls (18-19) and 42% of women 20-24 with more than one partner or a new partner in the last year reported that they were likely to request a chlamydia test in the next 12 months.

Factors associated with being unlikely to request a chlamydia test in the next 12 months among women 18 to 24 years old were:

- Fifty-five percent of women without health insurance indicated that they were unlikely to request testing as compared to 71% of women with health insurance.
- Women who reported having discussed their sexual behavior with a medical provider in the previous year were more likely to request future testing (38%) than women who had not had this discussion (25%).

## REQUEST FOR CHLAMYDIA TESTING FROM HEALTH PROVIDER AMONG CALIFORNIA WOMEN, 1998

### Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Branch



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